1895.

PLATES I TO XII.

TECHNICAL ART SERIES

OF

ILLUSTRATIONS OF INDIAN ARCHITECTURAL DECORATIVE WORK

FOR THE USE OF ART SCHOOLS AND CRAFTSMEN.

Reproduced in heliogravure from the original drawings made by the Officers of the Archæological Surveys in India, at the Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, and published under the authority of the Government of India.

SURVEY OF INDIA OFFICES, CALCUTTA.

1895.

Price Three Rupees.

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TECHNICAL ART SERIES, 1895.

PLATES I TO VI.

FATEHPUR SÎKRÎ: RAJAH BÎR BAL'S HOUSE.

WALL RECESSES, CARVED PANELS, AND BORDERS.

IN parts for 1891, 1893, and 1894 of the Technical Art Series, several plates illustrative of Akbar's Architecture at Fatehpur Sîkrî were given, and Plates I to VIII, which are now presented still further exemplify the style.

Plates I to V are taken from the house Rajah Bîr Bal built for his daughter, and they should be read along with Plates III to VII of last year's issue. The walls of the house, both inside and out, are beautifully carved from top to bottom. They are cut up into numerous bays by handsome pilasters (see Plate VII, Part for 1894), and midway between the pilasters are recesses, or niches, which served the purposes of cupboards. Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate a couple of these recesses. They measure 3 feet 9 inches in height and 2 feet 9 inches in width. In the centre is an arched opening, receding from the face of the wall about a foot. It is surrounded by a square and beautifully carved frame (Figs. 4, 5, 6, Plate I, and Figs. 5, 7, 8, Plate II), advanced slightly from the wall, resting upon a moulded sill. On the imposts of the archway are small corbels and springing from them is a cusped fringe running round the intrados of the arch. The spandrils above the arch are sunk and ornamented with well-cut rosettes. In the apex of the archway over the recess shown in Fig. 1, Plate I, a couple of birds, probably meant for parrots, are sculptured. This is the only instance of birds being carved upon the recesses, although sculptured representations of birds and animals (forbidden by the Qur'ân) are often found upon the buildings at Fatehpur Sîkrî.

Fig. 3, Plate I, and Figs. 1 and 2, Plate II, represent some of the carved panels upon the pilasters on the sides of the recesses. There are three panels, enclosed by borders, on each pilaster. The designs vary considerably, but the upper and lower panels are generally alike. The borders round the panels are varied, and samples are depicted at Figs. 3 and 4, Plate VII. They are carved chiefly with undulating scrolls, relieved from severeness by conventional foliage and flowers more or less Persian in character. Great attention has been paid to the treatment of the angles, the patterns being manipulated to avoid harshness and stiffness. The stone skirting between the sills under the wall recesses, and the floor of the rooms, are carved with beautiful oblong-shaped panels surrounded by borders sculptured with scrolls, etc. An example of one of the borders is given at Fig. 6, Plate II.

Plates III, IV, V and VI are diagrams of some of the patterns carved upon the pilasters and dadoes round both the exterior and interior walls of the rooms. They consist principally of geometrical traceries: many of the designs are rare, and are traceable to Persian and Arabic examples. Upon some the *svastika* or cross, a sacred ancient symbol, has been ingeniously introduced. The symbol is of great antiquity and is found on the rock-cut temples of Western India. It is prevalent also in Chinese and Japanese decoration. Many of the designs are suggestive of Japanese workmanship, but they may, with the exception of the *svastika*, which is purely Indian, have probably been derived from Arabia or Persia.

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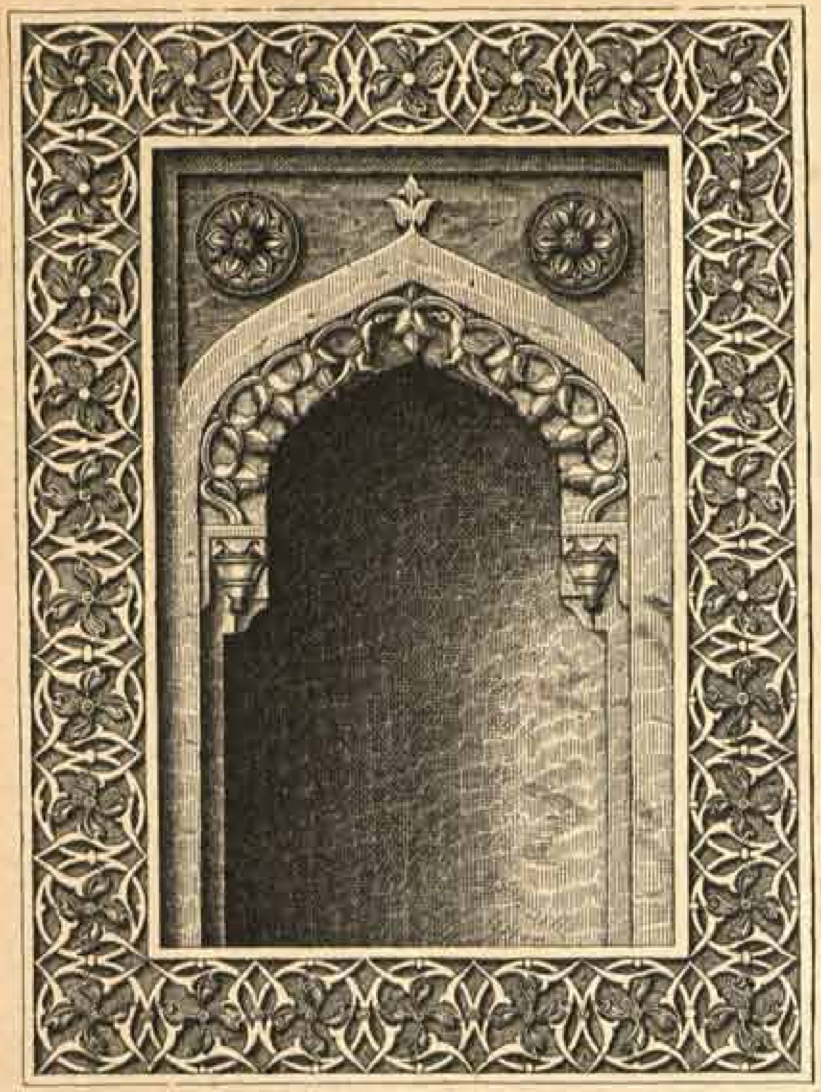


Fig. 1.



Fig. 3.

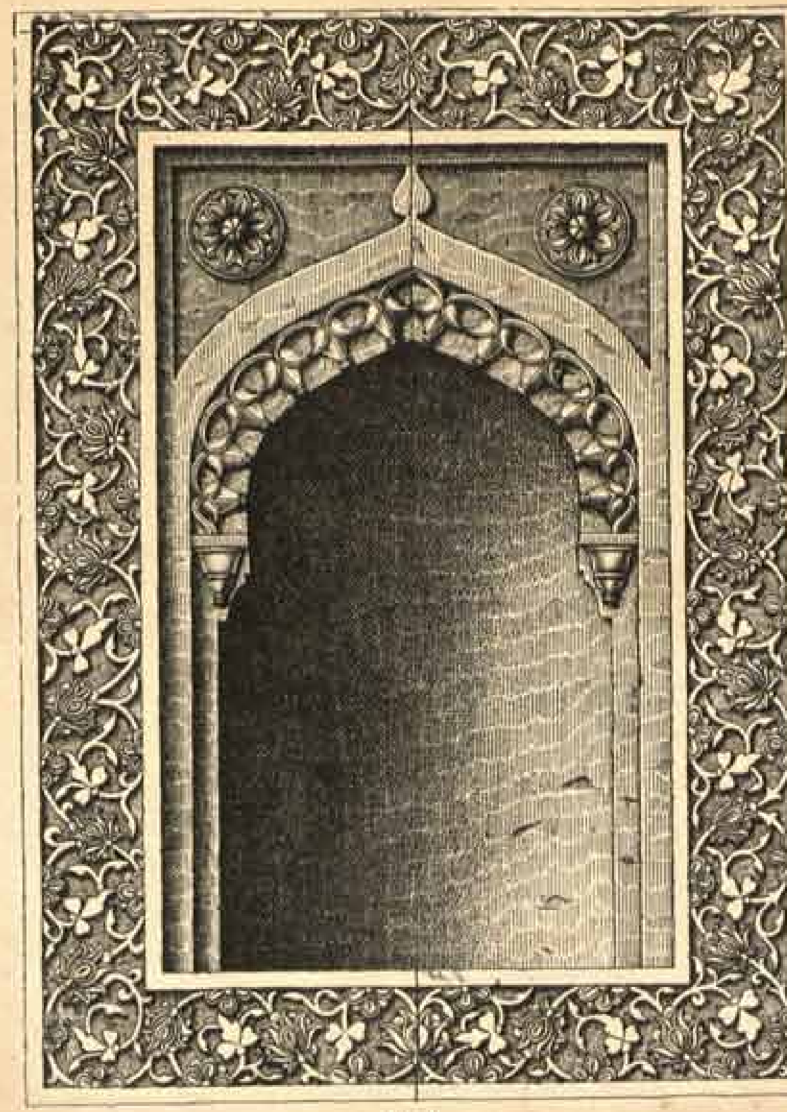


Fig. 2.

Scale for figures 1 & 2



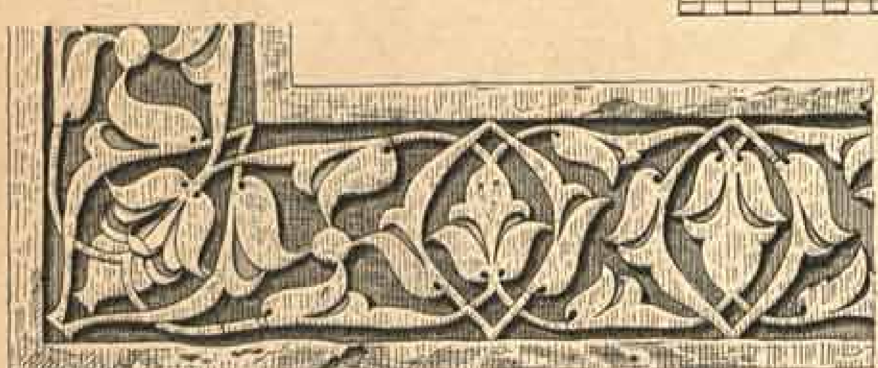


Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.

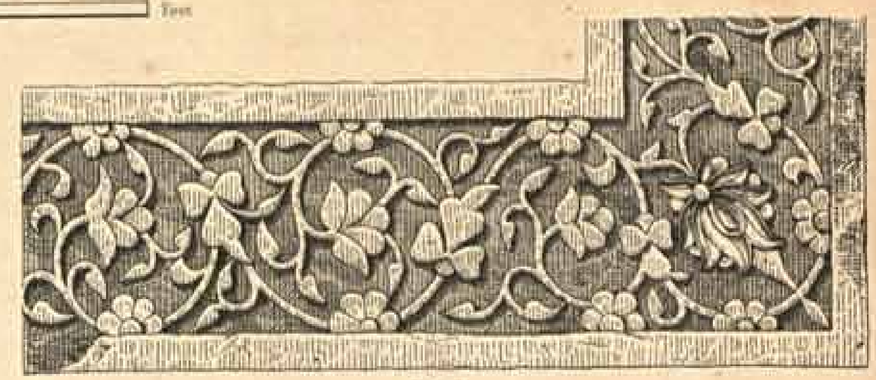


Fig. 6.

Photo-etching.

Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, July 1895.

Scale for figures 3, 4, 5 & 6



FIGURES 1 & 2, DETAIL OF WALL RECESSES, FIGURE 3, DETAIL OF CARVED PANEL, FIGURES 4, 5 & 6, DETAIL OF CARVED BORDERS, RAJAH BIRBAL'S HOUSE, FATEHPUR SIKRI.

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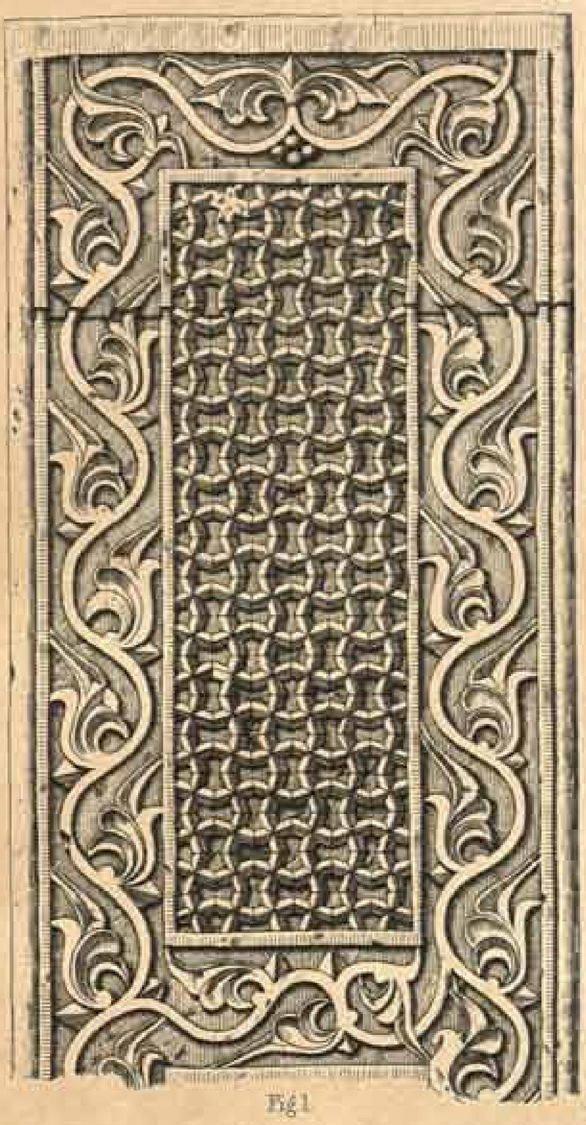


Fig 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig 3.



Fig 4.

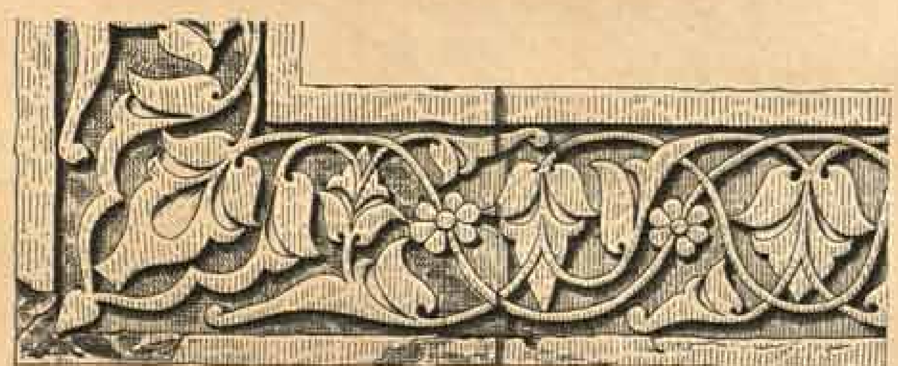


Fig 5.

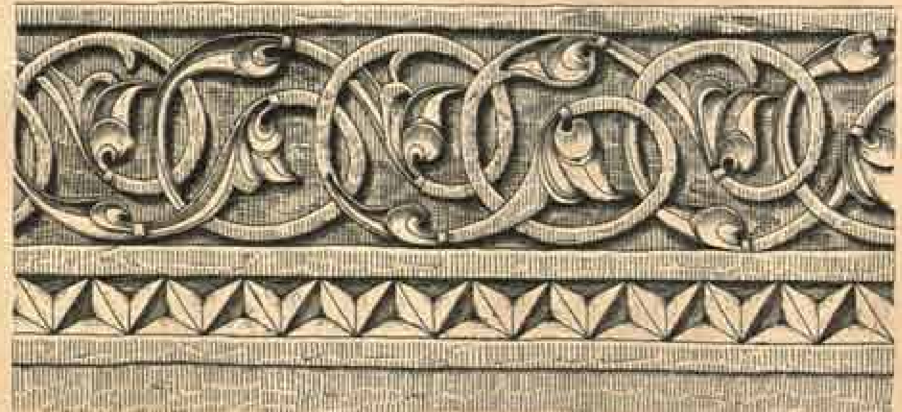


Fig 6.

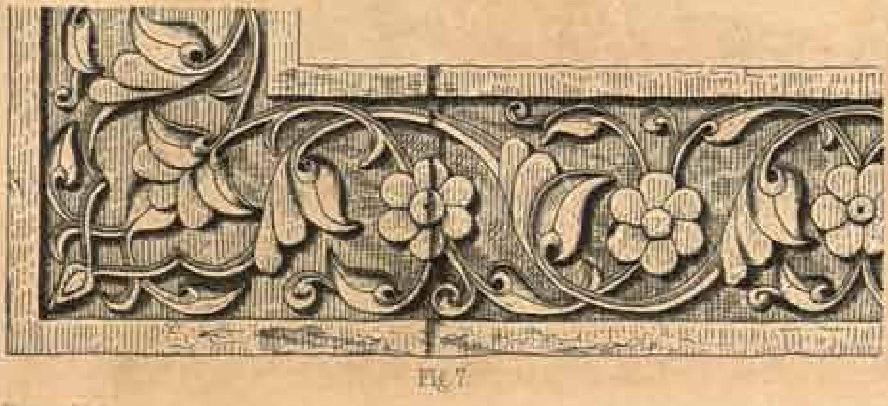


Fig 7.

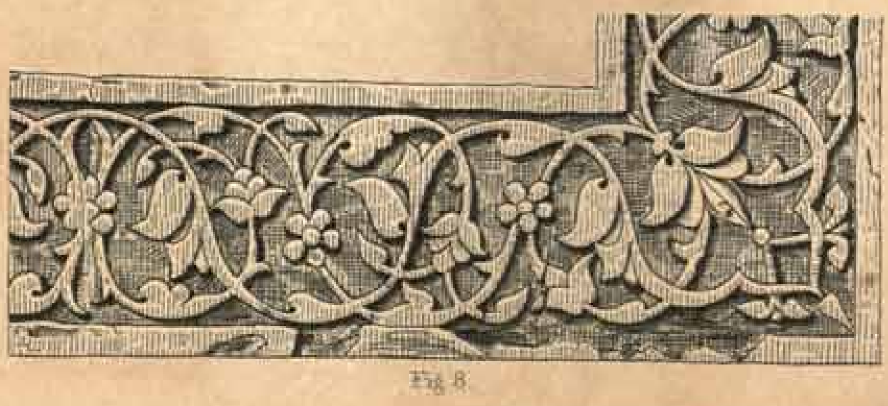


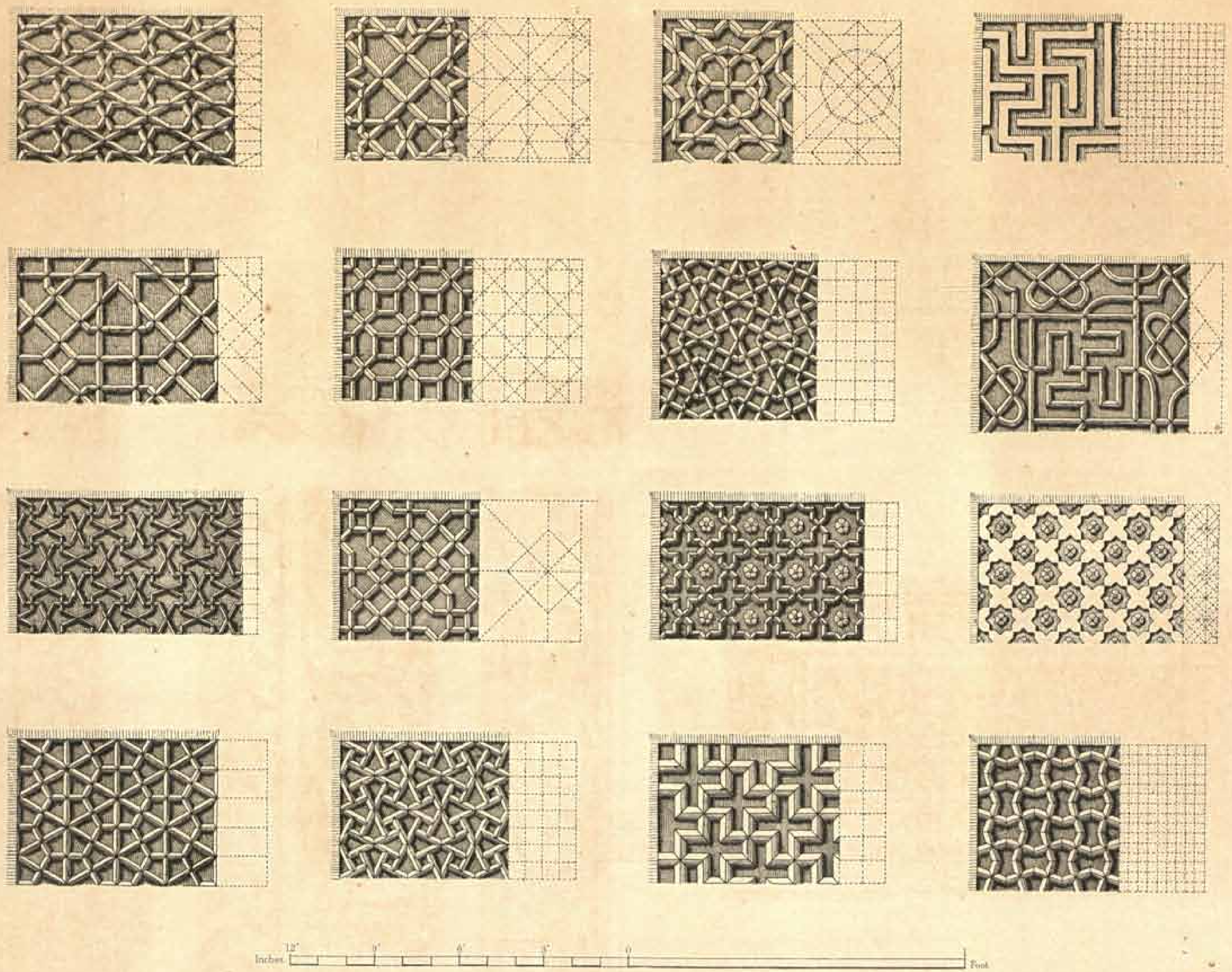
Fig 8.

Photo-etching.

Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, September 1895.

Inches 12 9 6 3 0 1 Foot

FIGURES 1 & 2, DETAIL OF CARVED PANELS UPON PILASTERS. FIGURES 3 TO 8, DETAIL OF CARVED BORDERS, RAJAH BIRBAL'S HOUSE, FATEHPUR SIKRI.

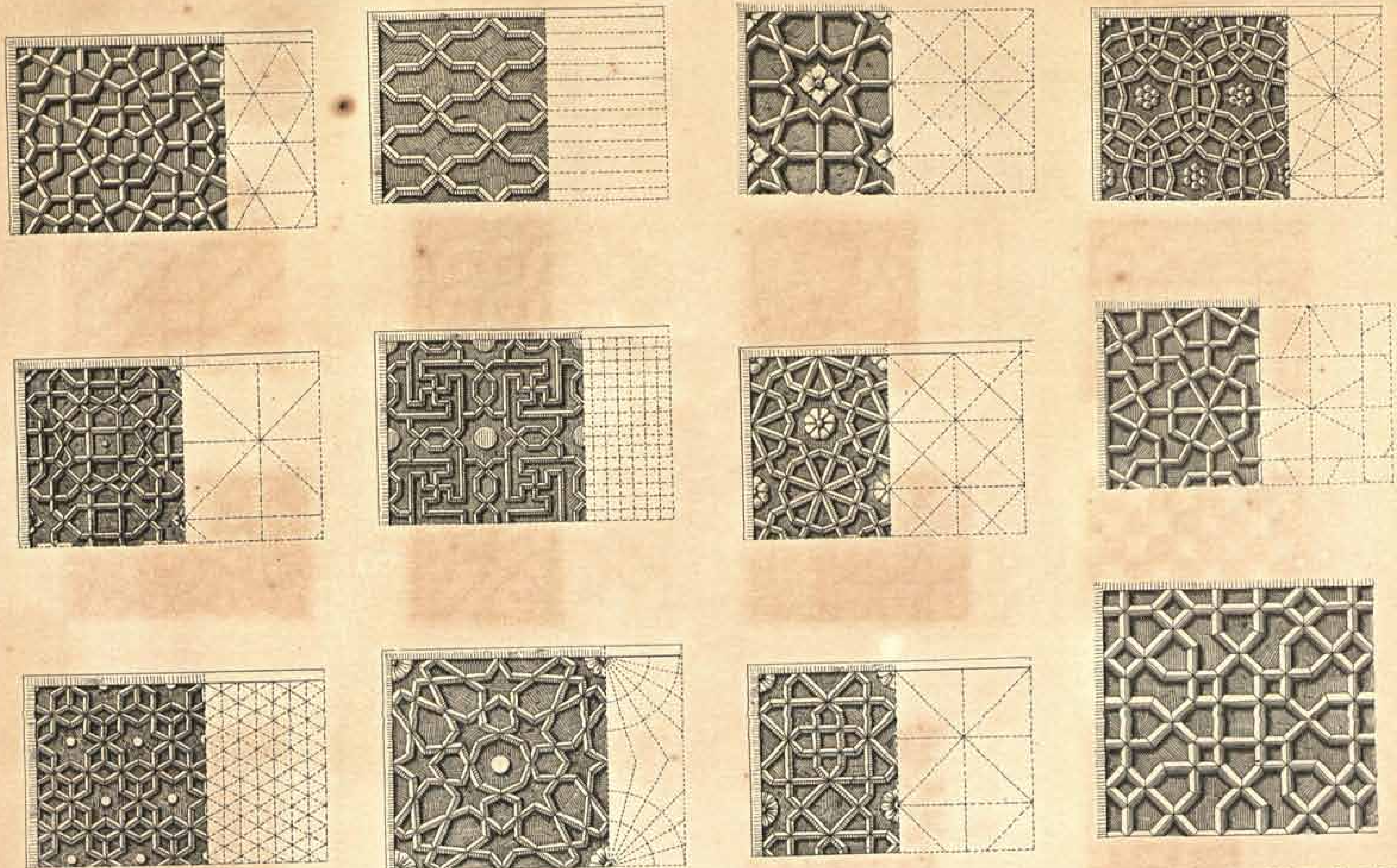


DETAILS OF GEOMETRICAL PATTERNS UPON THE PILASTERS, RAJAH BIRBAL'S HOUSE, FATEHPUR SIKRI.

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Survey of India Offices Calcutta, September 1895.

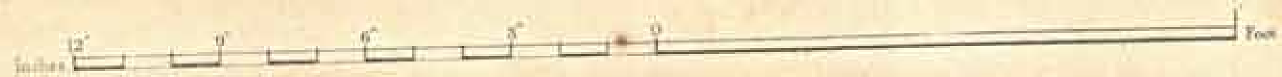
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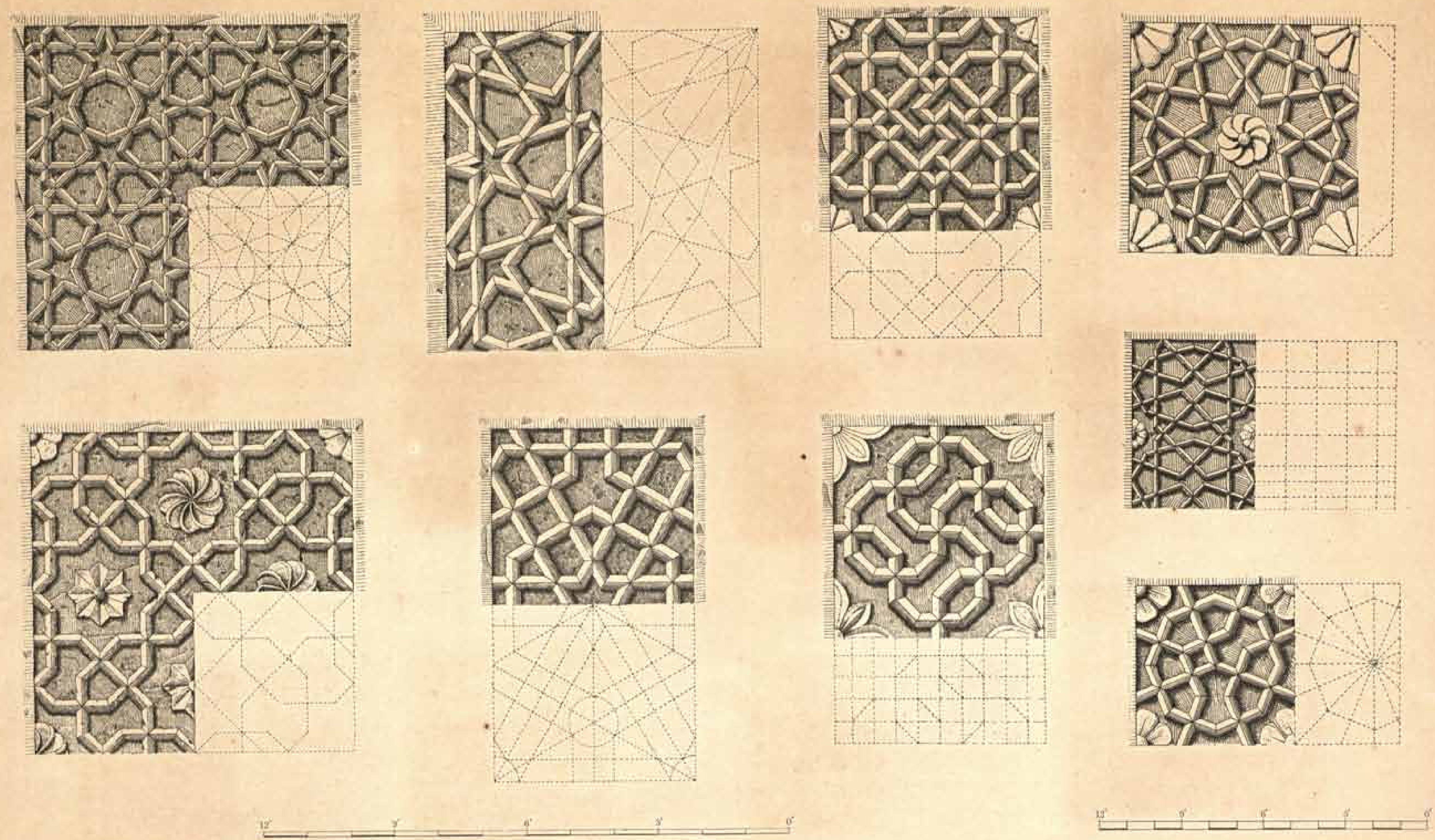
Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, September 1895.

Photo-etching.



DETAILS OF GEOMETRICAL PATTERNS UPON THE PILASTERS, RAJAH BIRBAL'S HOUSE, FATEHPUR SIKRI

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DETAILS OF GEOMETRICAL PATTERNS UPON THE DADOES, RAJAH BIRBAL'S HOUSE, FATEHPUR SIKRI.

Photo-etching.

Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, September 1895.

TECHNICAL ART SERIES, 1895.

PLATE VII.

FATEHPUR SÎKRÎ: JODH BAI'S PALACE.

CEILING OVER THE NORTH-EAST ANGLE ROOM ON THE GROUND FLOOR.

PLATE VII is diaper centre-piece from one of the ceilings in Jodh Bai's palace. It should be compared with the centre-piece given on Plate II of last year's issue of the Technical Art Series. It measures 6 feet 2 inches square, and is in stucco. The pattern is a most peculiar and difficult one, and in order to elucidate its construction a skeleton diagram is given on the bottom of the plate. The design emanates from the same school as the centre-piece shown on Plate II of last year's series; but it consists of a single instead of a double pattern, and is formed of straight instead of curved lines. The field, shown in black upon the diagram, is about one-eighth of an inch below the surface of the diaper. Ceilings of the kind were first floated over in stucco and brought to an even surface, and the design was then drawn or stamped upon it whilst moist and then afterwards very carefully cut out with a blunt instrument.

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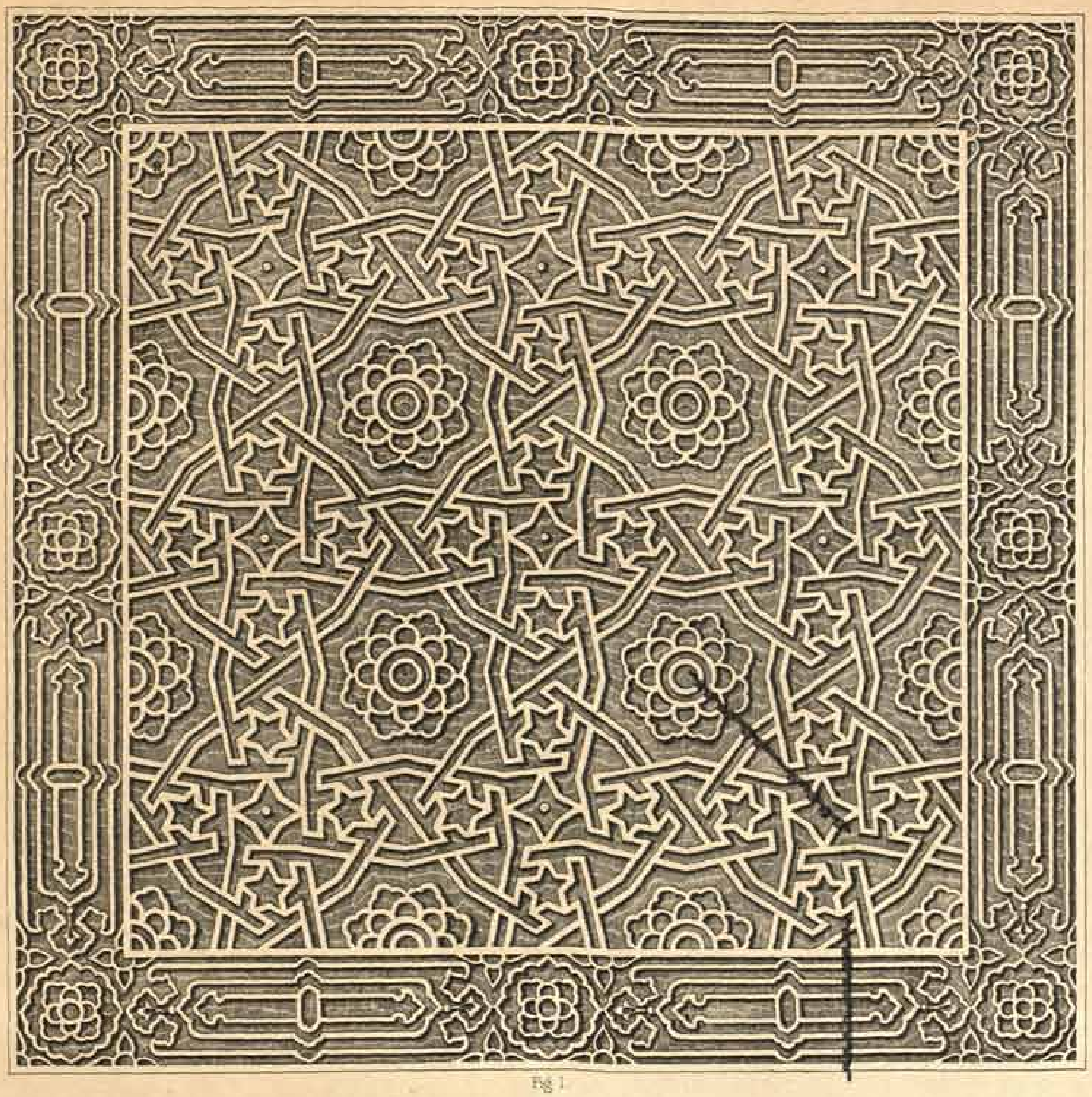
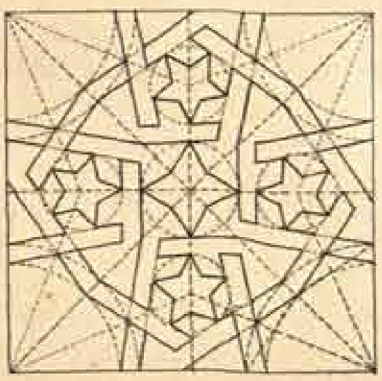


Fig. 1.



Inches 12" 9" 6" 3" 0 1' 2' 3' 4' Feet.

CEILING OVER THE NORTH-EAST ANGLE ROOM ON THE GROUND FLOOR, JODH BAI'S PALACE–FATEHPUR SIKRI.

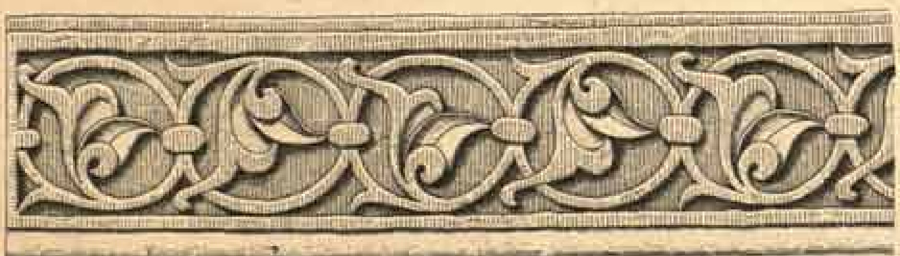


Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

Inches 12" 9" 6" 3" 0"

DETAILS OF CARVED BORDERS, RAJAH BIRBAL'S HOUSE–FATEHPUR SIKRI.

TECHNICAL ART SERIES, 1895.

PLATE VIII.

FATEHPUR SÎKRÎ: JODH BAI'S PALACE.

PERFORATED RED-SAND-STONE PANEL.

ON the north side of Jodh Bai's palace at Fatehpur Sîkrî, from which the ceiling shown on the previous plate is taken, is a viaduct leading from the upper floor of the palace to the Zanâna gardens. It is an unsightly structure and out of all keeping with the beautiful surroundings. Its bareness is relieved though by stately kiosques, bridging the passage at stated intervals. Occupying the side of one of these is the beautiful pierced panel depicted on Plate VIII. It measures 5 feet 3 inches in width and is 6 feet 2½ inches in height, exclusive of the frame round it which is 3¾ inches in thickness. The screen is an exceptionally fine one and is the only thing of the kind in Fatehpur Sîkrî, the whole of the other screen-work, for which Akbar's capital is so famous, being of geometrical patterns. The lines of the tracery, 2¼ inches in thickness, although not so true as one meets with in Western Art, are extremely graceful and pleasing and show the sculptor was not hampered by hard-and-fast set rules, so detrimental to true art. Designs of this sort were first drawn on the stone by a *pointer*, and from this rough drawing the mason worked, varying the design here and there, as his fancy led him. In the centre of the screen is a small panel, one foot one and three-quarter inches by one foot six and a half inches, inclosed by a goffered border three inches in width. The left side does not coincide with the right, and from its unfinished appearance it is probable that the slab cracked before completion, and the mason feared to finish it, lest the vibration from the chiselling should cause further and irretrievable injury.

Flowing tracery was introduced subsequent to Akbar's reign, and the screen would therefore hardly form a part of the original design of the viaduct.

Fig. 2 portrays a portion of the ceiling covering the north-west ground floor room of Bîr Bal's house at Fatehpur Sîkrî. The ceiling is in stone and is made up of nine monoliths extending from wall to wall, a distance of 16 feet, varying from 1 foot 3 inches to 2 feet 1 inch in thickness. The surface is divided into twenty-five sunk panels, surrounded by raised borders, carved with geometrical designs. In the centre of each panel and adding materially to the design is a richly carved leaf-patera. Round the outer sides of the ceiling is a border 1 foot 2 inches in width splendidly carved with a handsome and graceful scroll interwoven with a subordinate spiral scroll enriched with leafage, etc. The slabs of stone are supported on a bold cornice resting on an arched entablature running round the upper part of the room. They are united by iron cramps, and are overlaid with concrete, finished off in cement, to form the floor of the upper rooms.

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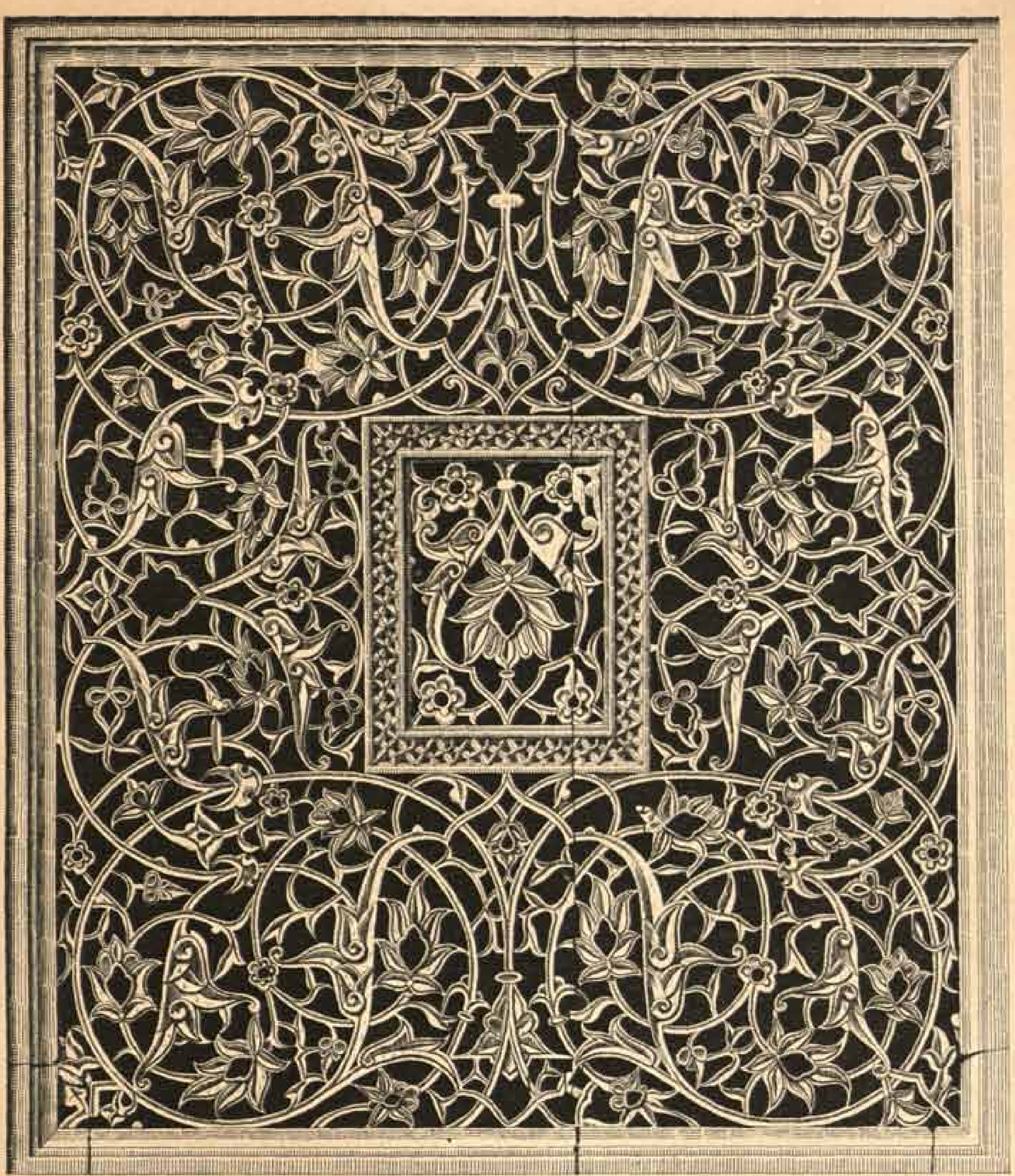


Fig 1

Inches 12 9 6 3 0 1 2 3 4 Feet.

PERFORATED RED SANDSTONE SCREEN PANEL FROM FATEHPUR SIKRI

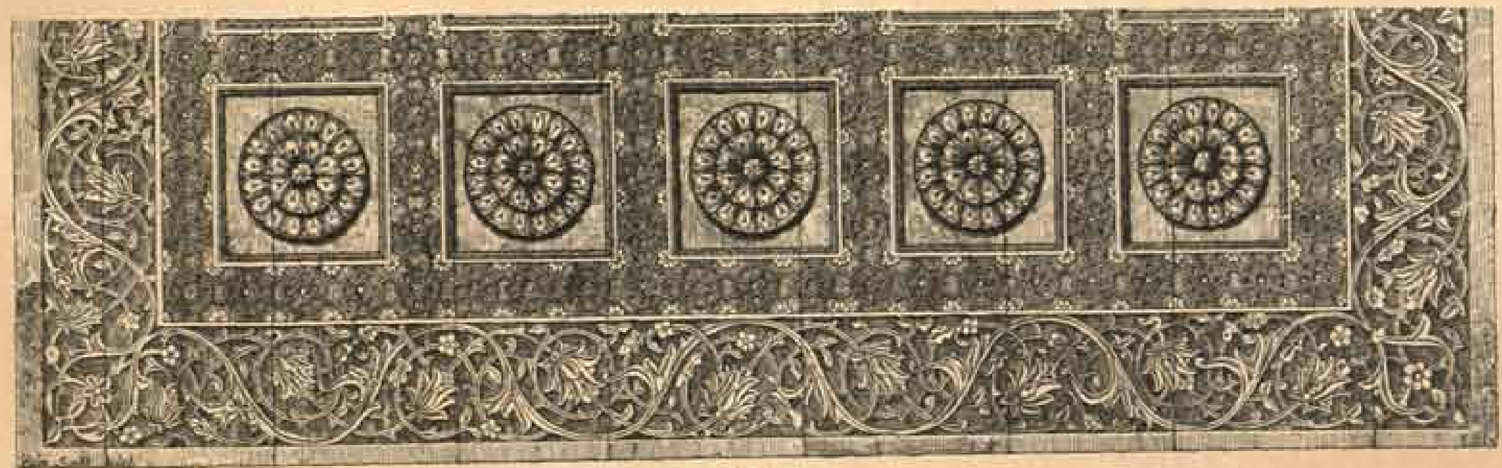


Fig 2

Inches 12 6 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Feet.

RED SANDSTONE CEILING ON THE GROUND FLOOR, RAJAH BIRBAL'S HOUSE, FATEHPUR SIKRI

Photo-etching.

Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, October 1895.

TECHNICAL ART SERIES, 1895.

PLATES IX, X, AND XI.

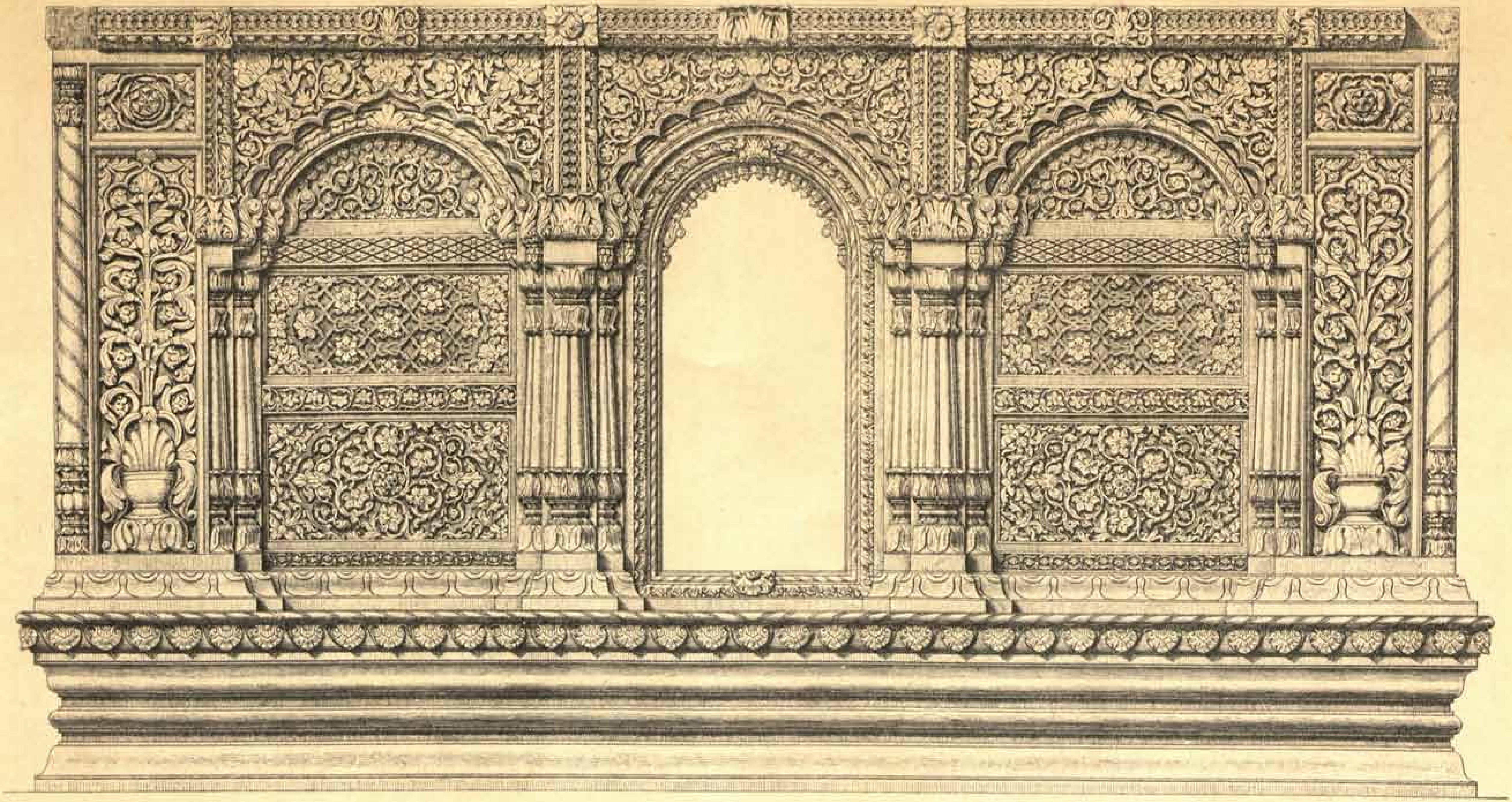
TOMB OF THE LATE NAVÂB AT PATHÂRI, CENTRAL INDIA.

THIS unfinished tomb, built quite recently, stands in a garden to the north of the village of Pathâri, which is situated about 8 miles from Kalhar, the nearest railway station on the Indian Midland Railway. The building, though small, was intended to be exceedingly ornate, but it was built only as high as the top of the side walls and was then left, owing to the death, it is said, of the architect and builder, a native of Etâvâ near Bina Junction. There appears to be no intention of the present Navâb to finish it, and it is already beginning to be overrun with grass and weeds. In plan it is very simple, being a square apartment with an entrance on the west, surrounded by a broad corridor and outer walls, in which are four wide entrances, one in the centre of each side. The material is, throughout, the sandstone of the locality, which is quarried out in huge slabs from the hillside below the village. The nature of the stone permits its being used in buildings in a style applicable to wood—a plank, post, and beam construction. What appears from outside such buildings as huge blocks of stone are no more than thin slabs set up edgewise and held in slots in upright stone posts. The walls of the larger buildings are thus constructed of an inner and outer thin shell, the interior being filled in with earth or broken stone.

Plate IX shews the western front of the inner enclosure of the tomb, and X and XI details from the other three sides. The work is cut in bold relief, and much of it savours more of classic than of Hindu work. The architect, no doubt, had access to European books of design, but has been most successful in its application in the present instance. The roof has not been begun, but in all probability it would have followed, generally, the outline of the Itimâd-ad-Daula at Agrâ.

H. COUSENS.

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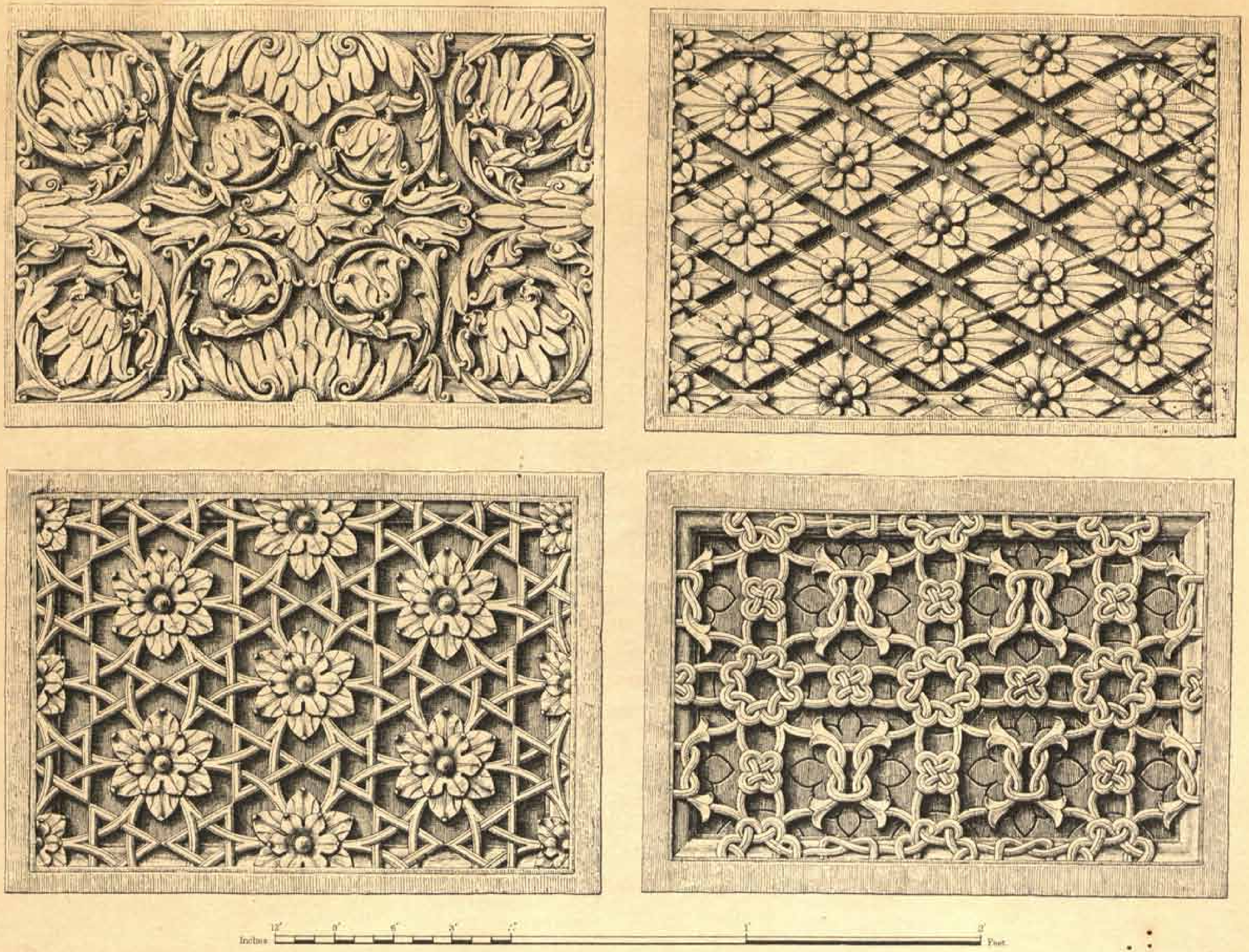


SCALE OF 12 6 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 FEET

FRONT ELEVATION OF TOMB OF LATE NAVAB, PATHARI, C.I.

Photoetching.

Survey of India Offices, Calcutta, November 1895.

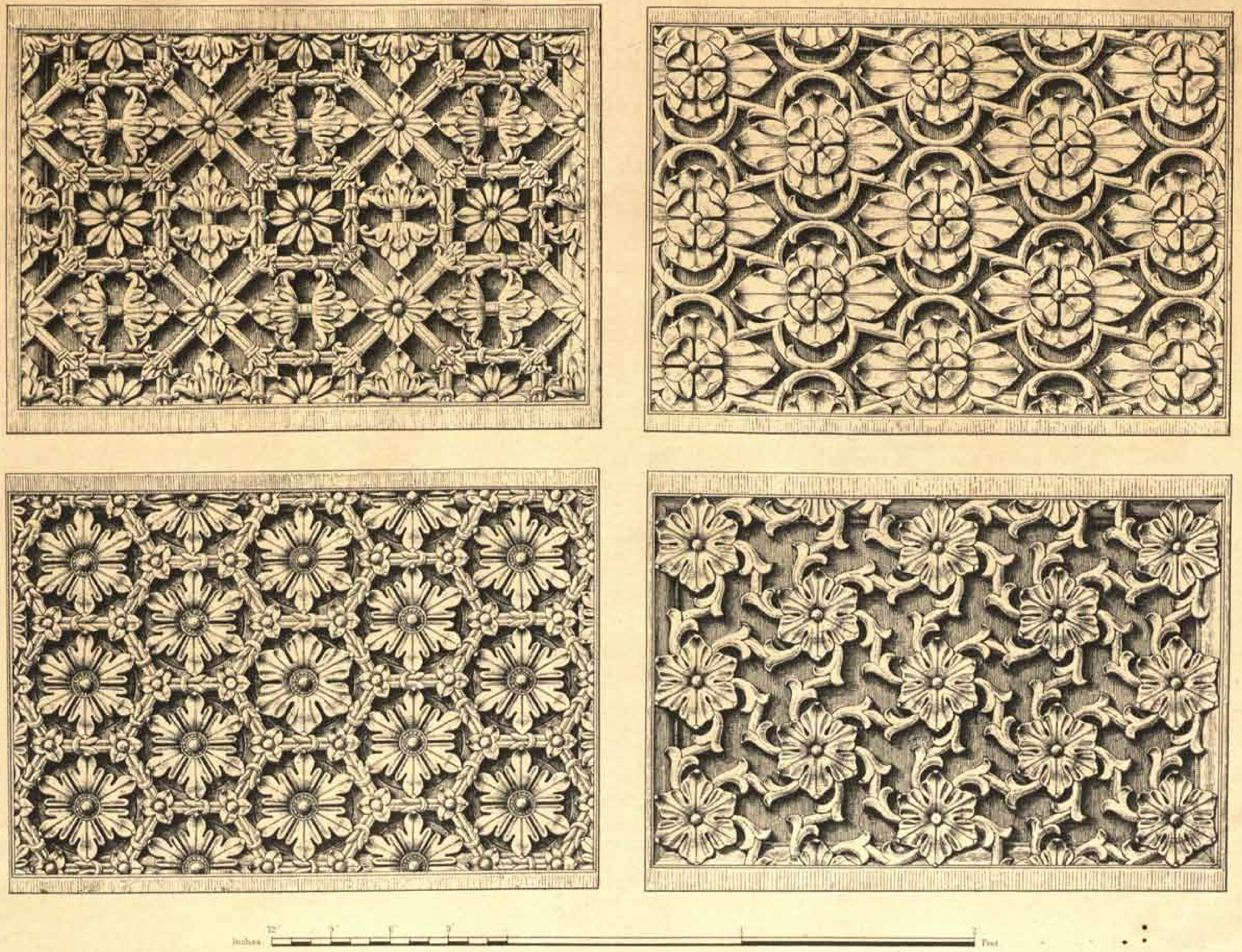


DETAILS OF SCULPTURE, TOMB OF THE LATE NAVAB, PATHARI C.I.

Photo-etching

Survey of India Offices Calcutta, November 1895

GOVT. ARCHÆOLOGICAL SURVEY OF WESTERN INDIA, Nº 155.



DETAILS OF SCULPTURE, TOMB OF THE LATE NAVAB, PATHARI, C.I.

Photoetching.

Survey of India Offices Calcutta, November 1895.

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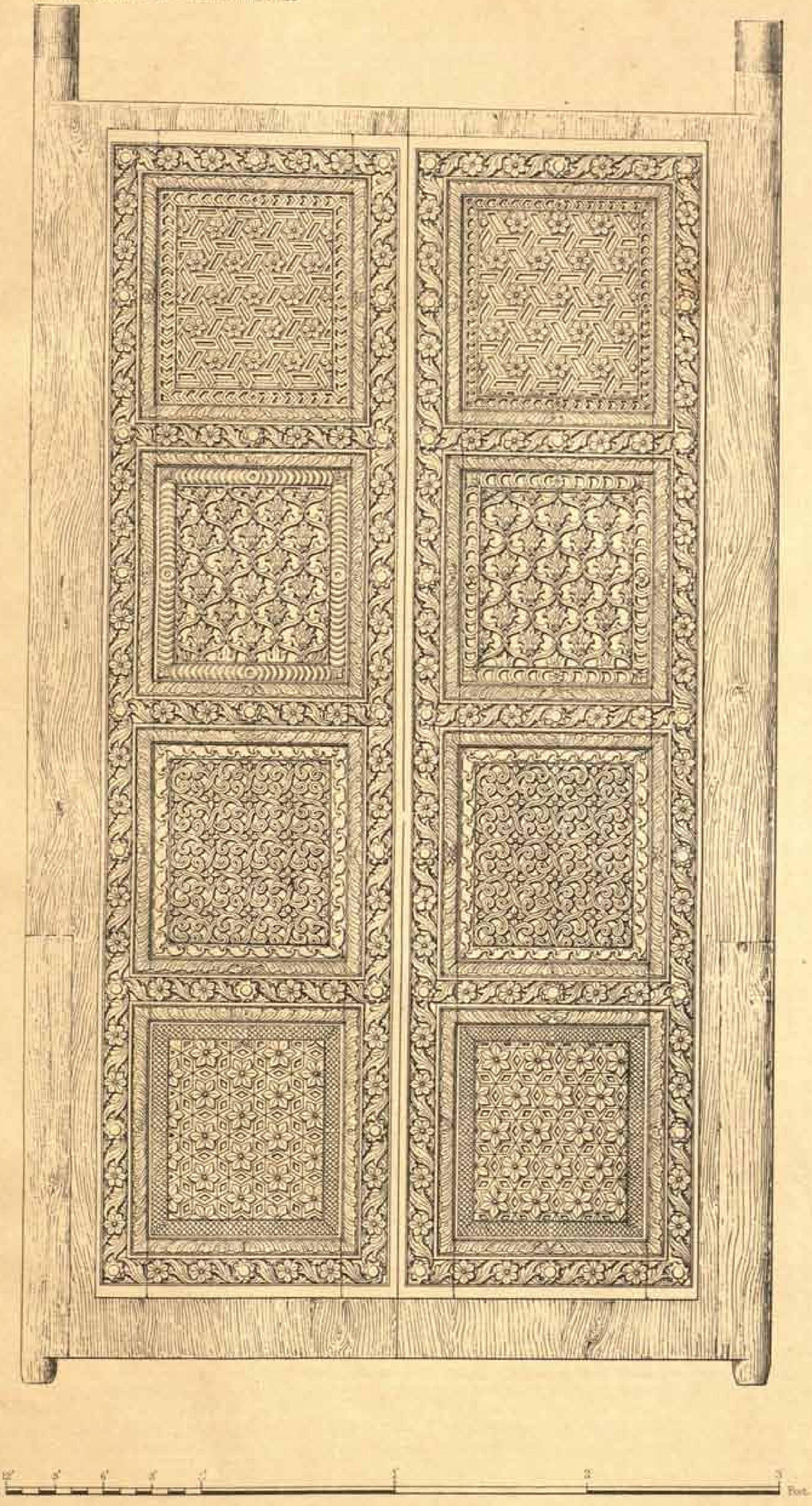
PLATE XII.

SHRINE DOOR OF TEMPLE OF ŚAṀKARA AT BHERÂGHÂT NEAR JABALPUR.

THE wood work, and especially the doors of the older temples, which, as a rule, are now in disuse, have disappeared wholly so that we have no specimens left to us of the elaborately carved doors of those times. But, judging from the remains of carved wood work of a couple of centuries ago, found decorating the exteriors of old dwelling houses in various parts of the country, the old temple doors must have been very fine indeed. The present plate, No. XII, depicts a more or less modern door to the shrine of the temple of Śaṁkara on the hill at Bherâghât, near Jabalpur, and just above the celebrated "Marble Rocks" of the Narbadâ. The design is more stiff and geometric than is found in older work and is not nearly so deeply cut. On the whole, however, it is a very pleasing and neat design.

H. COUSENS.

Govt. Archæological Survey of Western India, No. 1133.



WOODEN SHRINE DOOR OF GAURI SAMKARA TEMPLE, BHERAGHAT NEAR JABALPUR.

Photo-etching.
Survey of India Offices Calcutta, November 1895.